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# THE SECURITY CHALLENGES OF EUROPEAN DEMOGRAPHICS AND POLITICS CAUSED BY THE MODERN MIGRATION CRISIS

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**Abstract:** *The paper aims to analyze the ongoing situation in the European Union member countries caused by modern migration flows. It shows the real impact of refugees and migrants on European demography. It describes the future scenarios of global demographic and social challenges, which lead to the socio-economic and political crisis, and the failure of European political elites. The study mainly is based on the following research methods: descriptive, statistical, and analysis. The basis of the source represents the books, scientific articles, empirical and press materials, documents published on official websites in the field of migration policy. The essence of the modern migration in Europe became very acute since the current migrants are mostly followers of Islam, which in all its aspects and completeness is currently one of the most urgent topics, and draws the special attention of political circles and international clubs. Muslims in Europe are, first, immigrants whose influx into the European continent has seriously changed its demographic picture and political situation. In this regard, it should be said that the growing number of Muslims in Europe is causing certain demographic challenges that significantly affect the European socio-cultural situation, and lead to the financial and political crisis.*

**Keywords:** *Islam; Europe; Migration; Demography; Security*

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## INTRODUCTION

Several periods can be distinguished in the modern history of migration flows to Europe. First, at the beginning of the twentieth century, after the First World War, however the influx of Muslim immigrants was very small. The second phase can be considered the period after the Second World War, because of post-colonial development: many European countries urgently needed cheap labor resources to restore the post-war economy. The thirds period began at the beginning 90s as soon as the Soviet Empire was dissolved. The last and most important period of modern migration can be considered after the Arab spring and continues up today, which shapes a new picture of modern Europe. There is practically not a single EU country that

has not been affected by the migration crisis. To the greatest extent, the consequences of the influx of migrants are experienced by such bordering countries of the European Union as Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary, as well as the leading countries of the community - Germany, France, and Great Britain, several Scandinavian countries where the level of social benefits is quite high and there are large Muslim communities. As the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has recorded, the total number of migrants may rise significantly. In this regard, it is legitimate to state that the European crisis is part of the global migration crisis and only the tip of the iceberg that may fall in Europe soon. The European Union, in the opinion of both domestic and foreign analysts, experiences very tough times, which is manifested in the invasion of Europe by newcomers having different from European values. Here the situation is worsened by the fact that many of them are religious fanatics and do not accept the European culture and values. The adherents of the 'Islamic State' who penetrate the EU countries under the guise of refugees and proclaim their main goal to fight against all, who do not follow their radical ideology, in this regard pose a special danger. This development of events is already happening on the territory of several European countries. At the same time, the political elites of European states failed to cope with such a complicated situation, and are unlikely to take active and proper actions against migrants, because any of their actions will generate a sharp response from migrants. Moreover, the multiple numbers of migrants from the Islamic countries lead Europe not only to the economic and political crisis but to the demographic collapse as well.

### MODERN MIGRATION TRENDS IN EUROPE

Several periods can be distinguished in the modern history of migration flows to Europe. First, at the beginning of the twentieth century, after the First World War, however the influx of Muslim immigrants was very small. The second flow can be considered the period after the Second World War, because of post-colonial development. Since many European countries urgently needed cheap labor to restore the post-war economy, their governments stimulated the influx of foreign workers from other countries. The next period began in the late 80s, however, it was not as acute as the next one. A new and the most acute stream poured into Europe after the Arab spring turning migration into the central social problem of our time. Here we have to highlight that the influx of immigrants has increased especially in connection with the recent events in northern Africa and the Middle East. Immigrants strive to get to countries with the best standard of living, which means that in this regards the most share of migrants come to the fate of such economically prosperous states as Germany, Great Britain, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Thus, the number of Muslim migrants is growing here and in the whole of Europe causing certain demographic challenges that significantly affect the European socio-cultural image. In this regard, it is

worth to the statistics of recent 3 years and compares the situation. Thus, in 2017, the countries of the European Union had 4.4 million migrants. Nevertheless, these estimated data do not give a clear picture of the migration surges to the European Union as they also include the dynamic trends of movement of people between the EU Member States (Hackett 2017). It worth pointing out that in the same year - 2017 the most hospitable place for migrants appears Malta there was recorded 46 immigrants per 1000 persons, the second place was Luxembourg with 41 immigrants per 1000 persons (Migration and Migrant Population Statistics 2019).

Therefore, by 1 January 2018, the European demographic picture was the following: EU states had 39.9 million newcomers, which constitutes 7.8 % of the entire European community (European Union 2019). Here, we have to highlight the age factor: the European population was much elder than migrants: the age of the EU citizens was 44 years (Eurostat 2020), as for the newcomers their median age was 36 (Migration and Migrant Population Statistics 2019). Despite the existing demographic situation at the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, the European Commission declared financial subsidies for the EU states for the settlement of more than 30,000 refugees and migrants for the current 2020 year (European Commission 2019). It is worth noticing that participating in the construction of common European space, EU Member States; besides the development of their state migration policy also has a great impact on the development of community migration policy standards. EU countries have different migration policy experiences. They are still independent players on the field.

Currently, there is no consensus on how many Muslims are residing. Since certain research, groups give variable figures. This is because the researchers define the borders of 'Europe' in different ways, rely on different statistical calculations and survey results in individual countries. The ambiguity of the results is also because of the overwhelming majority of countries the category 'religion' is not included in the census, and therefore there are no reliable sources of information. The presence of illegal immigration, the extent of which is not always easy to assess, also complicates the situation. All this is complemented by the inevitable approximation of forecasts for the future. But, despite the existing difficulties, serious research makes it possible to draw up a general picture and predict the most likely development of the situation; they allow to discard extreme projections that either belittle the number of Muslims or (which is more common) dramatize the situation and the creation of a pan-European caliphate in the coming decades (Mukhetdinov and Boroday 2016).

It is worth highlighting that the fertility of migrants moving here exceeds the fecundity of Europeans by two to three times so that their number in Europe will double in 20-30 years, which will exacerbate demographic problems. In addition to the number of Muslim migrants, the number of Europeans who accept Islam is growing: there are already hundreds of thousands of them. There are even extreme forecasts of Western analysts, according to which the adoption of Islam by Europeans under the influence of

migration processes in 50 years can make Europe the main center of the Islamic religion. Very characteristic in this regard is the situation in the UK. If in 1981 the number of Muslims (immigrants from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh) was estimated at 750 thousand here, now there are about 3 million, and the number of births in the UK itself is at least 50% of this number. According to forecasts, by 2050, there will be no 'ethnic majority' in Britain; it will be washed away by interethnic marriages and the import of foreign labor (Chetverikova 2005).

## FUTURE DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES

For a brief overview of demographic issues, we can refer to the materials of the Pew Research Center. Pew Center's report is one of the most detailed sources of the problem of Muslim demography in the world. It is interesting primarily because it gives the dynamics of the growth of the Muslim population and a projection up to 2030. The Pew Center's report is characterized by moderate and balanced estimates based mainly on official sources. Sometimes, however, moderation leads to some underestimation of the indicators, but such shortcomings are inevitable in demographic studies. It is worth noting that the materials cited are given to introduce the problem, and they in no way claim to be a complete and exhaustive description of the situation. Thus according to the statistics of this center we can see, during the last two decades, the Muslim population of Europe has increased from 29.6 million (4.1%) to 44.1 million (6%); it is assumed that by 2030 it will be about 58 million people (8%).

Despite the high growth, the Muslim population of Europe will amount to only 3% of the global population by 2030, which is comparable to modern figures (2.7%). By 2030, in 10 European countries, the share of the Muslim population for instance in France it will reach up to 10.3%, Belgium -10.2%, as for Russia here the percentage will be 14.4. It is worth highlighting that currently, the number of Muslims living in Russia is about 16 million 379 thousand; it is predicted that by 2030 Russia will have to be one of the most Islamized European countries with 18 million 556 thousand followers of Islam (Pew Research Center 2011). However, the Muslim population of Russia has a long history that dates back to the times of Catherine the Great monarchy (r.1762-1796). It should be noted that exactly this period is marked by the peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Christians, which can be a good example of religious tolerance (Akhmetova 2013).

Roman Silantyev, who is considered a Russian expert in the field of Islam in his book 'The Newest History of Islam in Russia' writes that the history of Islam in Russia has not an exact date, since the information about the appearance of Islam varies: for instance certain historians claim that firstly Islam appeared in Russia in the year 642, it is the time when Muslims overran Dagestan (North Caucasus Region of Russia, populated mostly by Muslims); as for another group of scholars, they state that proliferation of

Islam started in Bulgaria, the Volga basin in 922, it is the period when inhabitants of this region began to follow the religion of Prophet Muhammad. Silantyev doubts both dates, as he assumes that the first time Russia met Islam in the XV century (Silantyev 2007). The history of Muslim spread can be divided into three periods: the first during the Tsarist Russia period; the second during the period of Soviet atheism; and the last after the dissolution of the Soviet empire (Alaverdov 2020).

T. Sarrazin distinguishes 5 main reasons for the European demographic problem:

The first main demographic load consists of a shift in the ratio between people of working age and people beyond working age since it is a key factor in assessing the future of Muslims in Europe. The Muslim population is younger. Almost 49% of Muslims are people under 30; among non-Muslims, this figure is 34%. It is assumed that by 2030 the superiority of Muslims in this indicator will remain (42% vs. 31%). It is also believed that Muslim and non-Muslim populations will age significantly by 2030: from 10.5% to 15.9% among Muslims and from 23.8% to 31% among non-Muslims (Pew Research Center 2011).

The second main demographic burden is the aging of able-bodied citizens: 30% of them in 2050 will be at least 55 years old and only 20% between the ages of 25 and 35 years.

The third major demographic burden is population decline from generation to generation. In the long run, it is impossible to imagine a state if the number of births in each generation falls by 36%, and in three generations, respectively, by 74%.

The fourth main demographic load is the different fertility of educated and uneducated strata. In a few generations, this will seriously affect the intellectual potential of society.

The fifth main demographic burden is the growing proportion of people with a Muslim migration history in the general population, partly due to immigration, partly due to higher fertility. Today, there are 2.2 children for every Muslim woman in Europe and 1.5 for non-Muslim women. The gap is expected to narrow slightly by 2030 (2.0 vs. 1.6). In all countries except Bosnia and Herzegovina, the birth rate is higher among Muslims than among non-Muslims. It is especially dominant in Norway, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Kosovo, Serbia, and Great Britain.

In this case, we have to refer to the recent studies that reveal a very interesting fact and say that even if fertility remains at its present level, the EU population will decrease by 30-40 million people. In addition, the age gap will rise, thus by 2050, over 10% of Europeans will constitute the elderly population. On current trends, the EU27 population will increase and by the year 2025 it will make 499 million, however, it will decrease back and by the year 2050, it will make up 470 million. According to the Global report, in 2050 if the flows of migration stop the numbers of Muslims in the EU will not grow so steadily and will weaken the Islamophobic attitudes (European Union 2012).



The fourth and fifth loads will cause a shift in the structure of the population towards the uneducated strata, who are marching in step with a lesser interest in acquiring knowledge, as well as with a lesser ability to acquire it (Sarrazin 2012).

However, there are two very important factors that T. Sarrazin did not consider; the first reason for the increase of the Muslim population is the influx of migrants from South Asia, North Africa, Turkey, and developing countries. The highest rates are in Spain (70 thousand), France (66 thousand), Great Britain (64 thousand) and Italy (60 thousand). It is assumed that by 2030, Europe will remain an attractive region in terms of immigration, but in some countries (Spain, France, Germany, and Great Britain) the figures will drop significantly (Pew Research Center 2017). In addition, the second and I think not less acute reason is that the number of Europeans who convert to Islam is growing: there are already hundreds of thousands of them and unfortunately, it tends to grow.

Besides, the cultural alienation of these migrants and their predominantly illiterate origin, which is reflected in correspondingly poor education, act unfavorably. Thus, the fifth problem sharpens and made even more acute the fourth one.

### FOR THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMISM

Certain scholars think that it is wrong to connect Islam and Islamism and perceive them as the same movement since Islam is a religion and Islamism is an ideology based on Islam. Modern Islamism is a comparatively immature political ideology that derives from Islam. However, it is worth saying that Islamism aims to revive fundamental Islam and has a tendency to become a political movement with social ideology. Thus, Islamism tends to transform Islam into a certain political ideology with its rules and embedded lifestyle.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning several definitions of Islamism. For instance, G. Mirsky (2016) thinks that Islamism is a certain trend influenced by the politics of radicalism ideology, and leads to fundamentalism. Here the emphasis is made on the fact that Islamism is a radical ideology. According to the thoughts of another scholar of religious researcher Z. Levin such perception is true, but only concerning radical Islamism. Certain groups of followers of Islamism aim to transform the lives of the whole world in the manner of 'pure Islam'. For this reason, to some extent, such a definition is also legitimate (although it is more suitable for radical Islamism). The radicals assume that Islamism is a global project for rebuilding the world; they think that the world should be back to the times of the Prophet Muhammad, they are sure that Muslims will save humankind from the devastating results of secularism, nationalism, globalization (Levin 2014). Radical Islamism relies heavily on an ideological movement called Salafiyya, however, we have to understand that, many Salafis are not radicals. The followers of mentioned movement assume the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet as the only basis of

faith and propagate the returning to the life which was led by early Islamic society, they advocate the idea the fundamentalism, and due to this, the movement is perceived as the movement of fundamentalist, as for the word Salafiyya in most cases it is translated as 'fundamentalism'. Malashenko (2006), a Russian famous scholar considers Islamism as the current version of Salafiyya, although, it is important not to forget about the existence of non-Salafi Islamists. Islamic fundamentalism, which is often perceived as political Islam, is just one component in a much more comprehensive process of the revival of Islamic ideas, customs, and rhetoric, as well as the return of the Muslim population to Islam. The main thrust is the Islamic Renaissance, not just extremism, an all-encompassing, not an isolated process. It is important to emphasize that the above-described formulations are more likely the explanation of radical Islamism, but not for the general Islamism, and say nothing about the presence of not less principal appearance as moderate Islamism.

In addition, concerning the above-given descriptions, it is worthy to remember that the Muslims interpret such things as 'laws prescribed by Islam' or 'Islamic principles' in different ways - and here not only radicalism but also quite moderate interpretations are possible. Besides, certain Islamists do not have such a desire to change the entire world following some Islamic principles. Much more often, we are talking about the restructuring of certain countries with a Muslim majority. In addition, the building of an Islamic state (if this is at all a question of it) is a very vague plan. Thus, not every Muslim should be assumed as an Islamist and perceived as a radical, extremist, or terrorist. It is important to understand that such movements do not have religions, since every religion calls for tolerance and peace.

## THE RISE OF RADICAL ISLAM IN MODERN EUROPE

The revival of Islam dates back to the 1970s and 1980s, but the events of the 1990s were a pure religious renaissance: in many countries, Muslims began to unite, mosques were restored, and Muslim madrassas, institutes, and universities were opened as well. In this period in the Muslim world, the influence of Islam on all spheres of human activity increased - economy, politics, culture, spiritual life. One of the reasons for this is the specificity of this religious system: Islam is not only a religion but also a way of life. Under Islamic slogans, national liberation movements intensified, political societies and parties, and international organizations emerged. This process went down in history as the 'Islamic revival'. In the 1970s, especially after the 'Islamic' revolution in Iran, a movement known as Islamic fundamentalism made it felt in the Muslim world. The main goal of the latter is a return to the foundation, that is, to 'pure, original Islam', the creation of a society and a state based on the Koran and Sharia (Koshelev and Kosheleva 2014).



The radicals can be distinguished in several directions: the inner one who strictly adheres to Islamic rules in their daily lives; and the political - a sect whose aim is to establish a theocratic government even through arms. In addition, we can claim that all of this contributes to poverty and unemployment (Khanbabaev 2007).

We can conditionally divide Muslims into three groups: a) traditionalists who seek to preserve religious, political, and social institutions in an unchanged form; b) modernists (the same reformists), who are followers of the intelligentsia only, who seek to interpret modern dogmas based on current scientific-technological and social progress in the world; c) fundamentalists as Wahhabis who represent the unemployed crowd (Alaverdov 2020).

Five key reasons for the rise of Islamic radicalism were highlighted by L. Grinin and A. Karatayev, for the first reason they name the collapse of the Soviet Empire atheism since people were eager to practice their religion, it revived very promptly in the whole post-Soviet space and Russia, the second reason was the situation in Balkan region, in this case, the talk is about the rise of Islamic movements. The third one is the fact that Islam grows in European countries is quite a rapid pace; the fourth is connected to the Chechen factor and their temporary victory in the Russia-Chechen wars, and the last fifth factor is the development of the Palestinian Authority (Grinin and Karatayev 2019). Therefore, it can be agreed that Islamism is a transitional phenomenon (Yapp 2004), but it is necessary to clearly and understand that this transition is still quite long in time.

Malcolm Yapp (2004) writes that Islamism is a phenomenon of a transitional period for two reasons: first, it is associated with modernization and its positions can weaken as soon as mobilized society transform to a new lifestyle and get used to the existing situation; secondly, it is typical for young people, and youth passes away. The peak birth rate in Muslim territories is projected in 2025, and then, according to the researcher, the Muslim population, like the rest of the world, will begin to age. Yapp does not see the aging process as one that will solve everything naturally but believes that thanks to it, the problems of mitigating radicalism can be more successfully solved (Grinin and Korotaev 2019).

It is worth saying that after the rise of radical groups there has been a rapid increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Europe. For instance, in 2014, 4 terrorist attacks were recorded in the EU, which Europol experts classified as 'fully or partially inspired by religion', namely, radical Islamism and in 2015 there were already 17 such terrorist attacks, as a result of which 150 people died. Moreover, in the official documents with Europol statistics since 2016, a separate column has appeared which is called 'jihadist terrorism'. In 2016, jihadist terrorism again demonstrates significant numbers in Europe - there were 13 such attacks (of which in France - 5, in Belgium - 4, in Germany - 4), as a result of which 135 people died. According to the accepted academic classification, the following structural components are distinguished in extremism:

extremist ideology, extremist activity, an extremist organization. The ideology of Islamist terrorism, which carries out its criminal activities in Europe in the first two decades of the XXI century, is radical interpretations of the Muslim religion, which lead to such destructive practices as radical jihadism and shahids.

Radical jihadism evaluates the events that take place in the world in the framework of the idea of a holy war, jihad. He proceeds from the belief in the imperativeness and general importance of his ideas, which is accompanied by extreme manifestations of religious intolerance. And yet arrogant religious fanatics go to kill, convinced that they are doing holy work, defending what they consider to be good from what they consider to be evil (Nesprava 2018).

Pew Research Center materials show that Muslims constitute about 6% of the European population, and this number will grow in the coming decades. At the same time, the growth rate will decline, which is associated with a drop in the fertility rate and stabilization of immigration. By 2030, Muslims will make up approximately 8% of the total population of Europe. Thus, we can say that the Islamization of Europe is proceeding at a moderate pace, and no sharp leaps are expected here; the model of Eurabia or a pan-European caliphate appears to be fantastic and demographically impossible (analysts from the Pew Center agree with this). Probably, the moderate increase of Muslims will lead to a more dynamic involvement of Muslims in social phenomena. However, according to another research of the same Pew Research Center, there is a positive fertility trend among Christian mothers. The research says reveals that in recent years Christianity had quite a good birth rate compared to any religion, thus allowing Christianity to have the status of the world's leading religion. However, in the nearest future, in less than the next two decades, the number of babies born to Muslims is expected to modestly exceed births to Christians, according to new Pew Research Center demographic estimates. Thus, we can say that Muslims have a comparatively young population with elevated fecundity rates that is predicted to increase up to 225 million in the years between 2030 and 2035, as for the Christians it is expected to have a scope of 224 million. In this scenario, the Islamic population will slightly increase Christians and the world will have a slightly larger Muslim adherent (Pew Research Center 2017). However, if we consider the above-mentioned fourth reason for the demographic crisis it is very likely that the number can change since not all the children will follow the religions of their parents. Since according to the same research the world's largest religion in 2015 was Christianity, it constitutes one-third (31%) of the world's 7.3 billion people. Muslims occupied second place; their followers were 1.8 billion people or 24% of the worldwide population. The population of the world tends to rise by 32%, which will make 9.6 billion between 2015 and 2060. In that time, the Muslims may become the principal religious group, since it will have a relatively younger population with the highest fecundity. As for the Christians, their followers will increase by 34%, here we can see a small difference in the favor of the Christian future


population. Thus by 2060, the count of Muslims will reach 3.0 billion, which will constitute 31% of the world population, as for the Christians it will be 3.1 billion if we convert it in percentage it will make 32% (Pew Research Center 2017).

## CONCLUSION

The migration crisis occurred to be a long-term factor that determines the socio-economic and political development of most European countries. It expresses the ability of the European Union as a supranational entity to ensure the security and interests of its member countries. However, if the migration flows continue, Europe could plunge into chaos: it would face pressure from both migrants who dictate their rules and right-wing European radicals organizing demonstrations throughout Europe. In this case, Europe will be engaged in clashes, and calling for the protection of Europe from Islamisation. All moderate democrats, liberals, multiculturalists that were inherent in a calm Europe a couple of decades ago will soon find themselves between the two camps of radicals: radical migrants and radical right-wing Europeans.

The situation will become more complicated due to the increased number of the Muslim population in the EU. Thus according to the given statistics, we can see, that in the last two decades the followers of Islam in Europe have increased from 4.1% to 6%; and is assumed that by 2030 it will be about 8% of the total European population. However, it is worth saying that Islam is one of the main world religions, which has played a significant role in the history of human civilization. Islamic history, culture, and philosophical and literary heritage are distinguished by extraordinary richness, depth, and diversity. Their achievements, especially in the field of theology and philosophy, are acknowledged worldwide.

## Recommendations

- EU population has to change its current hostile attitude toward the migrants, otherwise, it would lead to systematic chaos;
- to understand that as much they insist the newly arrived Muslim accept the European values and forget their own, it will make the situation even more complicated;
- not to mix the radicals with religion, since religion itself has nothing in common with radicalism, extremism, and terrorism, and remember that all the religions ask for tolerance and patience and Islam is not an exception and does not cause any threats to the EU society, thus having more tolerant approach and be more patient toward the Islam; and
- EU countries have to initiate special parental programs and subsidies to increase the European birth rate. 

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